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Room With a View

Nestled among the trees on Peak 8 is a slopeside home with penthouse views.

BY SHARON WITHERS

A Breckenridge penthouse with views may not seem all that extraordinary. But a ski-in/ski-out penthouse might raise a few eyebrows.

Homeowner Dave Pearce knew he wanted a home nestled among the trees along a ski run. He also wanted to see, feel and taste the mountain and its panoramic views, and experience the changing light throughout the day and the seasons.

“The biggest challenge in building this home was giving the homeowners the views they wanted and staying within the 35-foot height restriction Summit County places on homes in this pocket of land at Breckenridge Ski Resort,” says architect Michael Gallagher. Taking advantage of the fairly steep slope, he designed the 5,000-square-foot structure in three levels, with the upper level serving as the living area.

Glass walls on much of the third level open the home to extraordinary views, giving rise to

the “penthouse” description for the three-story, single-family home. The second level is the ski-in/ski-out level, with a mudroom and master suite; and the lower level is the sleeping quarters for the children and guests. In all, the home has two master suites, boys’ and girls’ bunk rooms and a guest room. Another mud room, for summer use, is located by the garage.

“Miners at the turn of the 20th century made roofs steep, and the tradition has continued,” says Gallagher. “Those homes didn’t have patios or sophisticated roofing systems.” He explains that today’s roofing membranes are greatly improved over older materials, and new technology makes flat roof systems more

robust. Perhaps surprisingly, a flat roof also offers a couple of advantages in snow country: The snow from the roof doesn’t create an avalanche onto the patio, and icicles are generally fewer and smaller. Gallagher designed internal drains for snowmelt.

Above all, however, the relatively flat roof meant Gallagher could stay within the height limit while allowing the living areas as much volume as possible. Ceiling heights are 11 and 12 feet, which add to the spaciousness.

Apart from how a flat roof handles snow, the obvious question for Coloradoans is heating. The glass walls and doors are low-E double pane and the heating is a radiant heat floor system.

MOUNTAIN MODERN RISES TO NEW HEIGHTS. The steel pivot front door is from Neoporte Modern Door. Lights on the custom-designed fixtures twinkle in the stairwell windows, which give guests a view of the stone elevator shaft as well. The roof line above the room with a view is slightly elevated, rising from the opposite rear roof corner of the house, in order to create a sense of an expanding, soaring view.



ROOM WITH A VIEW. The penthouse-like views bring the outdoors in, and in summer the patio extends the living space. The fireplace is from Heat & Glo. The light fixture with silver leaf planes appears to float over the conversation area in front of the fireplace, and is from German designer Ingo Maurer. The tufted leather sofa is from Ligne Roset; the beige swivel armchairs are from Minotti.

Nonetheless, Gallagher admits some heat loss is inevitable with that much glass. The fireplace on the upper level is more than a pretty accent; it puts out an incredible amount of heat. Unconventional in its design, the fireplace features stainless steel tubes that replace traditional logs in the firebox, as well as LED lighting that displays six distinct colors.

The entire house is not quite so unconventional. Traditional materials used in new ways tie the home to its mountain setting. Vertical cedar siding, natural stone, corrugated galvanized steel, stainless steel and glass compose the exterior.

Developing strong relationships from the exterior to interior and from one level to another was important to the design. Interior designer Donna Grace McAlear used the exterior stone, mountain ash stone veneer, on the elevator



INDOORS AND OUTDOORS. Mountain ash stone veneer used on the exterior of the house wraps the elevator shaft. The light fixtures, positioned safely out of reach of children, span two levels and illuminate the two large stairwell windows. The elevator door, made of American white birch from Minnesota, was fabricated in Portland, Oregon, with stainless steel inlay and a raindrop glass panel. The inlays echo the entry door and the steel railings and stringers of the staircase. A deck wraps around the upper-level great room at tree-top level. Aluminum-framed windows with built-in thermal breaks create the glass skin of the house; the posts are the actual structure.





Glass walls on much of the third level open to stunning views, giving rise to the “penthouse,” description of the three-story, single-family home.



FUNCTION AND BEAUTY. Cabinets are gray-stained European oak. The mosaic tile backsplash is practical and adds texture and color to the sleek kitchen; the tile is from Waterworks. Leather barstools with adjustable height can be used for additional party seating. The custom-designed lighting is the exact length of the island; the high position allows for an unobstructed view. The two-tiered island was designed by McAlear, who used granite on the raised surface and solid Caesarstone quartz on the lower surface and countertops. The nine-pendant light over the Berman Rosetti koa wood dining room table is from Ligne Roset.



UNIQUE LIGHTING. The master bedroom lighting fixture, by Jeremy Cole of New Zealand, is Aloe Bud, a handmade matt bone china chandelier. The bedside lamps are one-of-a-kind with coral bases from Swank Lighting. The rounded ceiling is high-gloss cherry veneer. The bath tub is from MTI.



shaft and the great room fireplace surround. The wood flooring throughout the house is European oak; doors are American white birch with stainless steel inlays. “I used the warm ochres, grays and brown of the exterior stone for inspiration in creating the interior palette,” says McAlear.

The same palette is used throughout the house, with punches of accent color in the family room. The elevator shaft, situated near the front door and garage, connects all levels of the house and acts as an anchor. The stairs dramatically wrap around the elevator shaft, creating a strong, interior focal point without inhibiting the views.

“The stairway is playful, open and daring,” says Gallagher. “Someone who is afraid of heights might not appreciate it.”

McAlear emphasized the open, playful nature of the stairs by designing a two-tiered pendant light fixture that was centered in each of two large windows in the stairwell. At night, she says, the lights look like snowflakes or stars. “It was important that the lighting throughout the house not interfere with the views,” McAlear says. “The lighting is artistic and dramatic. And the furniture was kept low to preserve the views.” In order to take full advantage of the views, McAlear designed flexible seating arrangements for the furniture. Four swivel chairs in the great room allow guests to take in the views without moving around the room.

Gallagher delivered on the client’s goals, and then some. McAlear followed suit, building on his fresh take on mountain modern. The result is a home on three levels, which functions as smoothly as if it were one level, with killer penthouse views. **6/17**

{ Resources }

ARCHITECT

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Breckenridge
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INTERIOR DESIGNER

Donna Grace McAlear, New
Mood Design, Atlanta
newmooddesign.com

EXTERIOR STONE

Mountain Ash Veneer,
Telluride Stone, Denver
telluridestone.com



A POP OF COLOR. The colorful family room on the middle level features a sofa, chair and lighting from Ligne Roset. The ski room, off to the side, of the family room, connects to the outdoor patio and the ski runs. Like the elevator door, the doors throughout the house are of American white birch from Minnesota, fabricated in Portland, Oregon, with stainless steel inlay. The upper level seating area brings the view into the vignette, which was created with two sky-blue swivel pumpkin chairs from Ligne Roset and a shag rug that reflects the mountains.